

Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership
Core Comprehensive Examination Paper
Rubric

After completing the first year's core classes and before the end of fall term of the second year, students must complete a comprehensive examination. The examination consists of a paper in which students demonstrate a mastery of, and the ability to apply, foundational concepts and skills gained through course content in the first year - Ed 630 Principles and Practices of Learning, Ed 640 Organizational Leadership Theory and Research in Education, and Ed 650 Educational Policy and Politics. Students must successfully pass the Core Comprehensive Examination before continuing beyond the fall term of the second year of the doctoral program.

Core Comprehensive Examination Paper

Purpose. The purpose of the core paper is for students to demonstrate their ability to extend and deepen their understanding of a significant educational problem or issue through the analysis and synthesis of concepts and frameworks from the core curriculum that they have studied. The paper builds upon the doctoral core curriculum and addresses specific implications associated with three core curriculum areas: (a) principles and practices of learning, (b) organizational leadership, and (c) educational policy and politics. These three areas of the curriculum inform and provide perspectives on the central problem or issue. Thus, the paper is about the central problem or issues, as seen through the three areas, which offer lenses to understand the problem or issue and which lead to new ways of thinking and /or action.

The paper is not meant to simply chronicle the content of the core curriculum. The intent is to provide the student with an opportunity to: (a) demonstrate the ability to apply foundational concepts and skills gained through the doctoral core to the critical examination of a significant educational problem or issue, and (b) based upon that investigation and analysis, synthesize what has been learned about the problem or issue, concluding with specific recommendations for further research, practice, and /or policy development or implementation.

Elements of the Core Comprehensive Examination Paper. The paper will contain the following elements, although not necessarily in this order:

- a) identification of the problem or issue, including relevant definitions
- b) discussion of the problem's or issue's educational significance and its context (e.g., brief discussion of historical, social, and/or cultural contexts)
- c) analysis of each core area relative to the problem or issue, demonstrating a broad understanding of each core area in terms of the problem or issue; the analysis is not merely a repetition of what scholars have said, but uses appropriate concepts, frameworks and theories from each core area to investigate the problem or issue, to compare and contrast perspectives, and to question assumptions of those concepts, frameworks, and theories and/or of the issue itself
- d) conclusions that synthesize and discuss the proceeding analysis and application into a new, more complex understating of the problem or issue or a reframing of it; and
- e) recommended actions in professional or community settings related to leadership practice, teaching, policy, and/or research.

The paper is to be 30 double spaced pages (7500 words) plus reference list and an abstract of 150 words. The paper is expected to follow current American Psychological Association (APA) guidelines, and to be written with clear and concise language, free of grammatical and typographical errors, and to a wide readership of educators as it may be later disseminated to inform the broader professional community about this particular problem or issue of educational significance.

Faculty members of the student's core examination committee will assess the core paper using the following rubric.

In writing their core paper, students are encouraged to consider the following definitions of terms used in the rubric:

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|------------|---|
| Analyze | Separates material or concepts into component parts to explore understandings and relationships. |
| Critique | Make judgments about the value of ideas or materials. |
| Synthesize | Builds a structure or pattern from diverse elements. Put parts together to form a whole, with emphasis on creating a new meaning or structure |

Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership
Comprehensive Core Examination Rubric

Student_____Faculty Reviewer_____Date_____

Element A: Identifies and contextualizes a significant problem of practice

Levels of Proficiency			
	Emerging	Proficient	Exemplary
Identifies a problem of practice and recognizes its boundaries	Describes an educational situation and alludes to a problem	Identifies the problem and alludes to its boundaries	Clearly identifies the problem and its boundaries
Describes the context of the problem of practice	Vaguely situates the problem in its historical, social, and/or cultural context(s)	Generally situates the problem in at least one of its relevant historical, social, and/or cultural context(s)	Clearly situates the problem through an analysis of its historical, social, and/or cultural context(s)
Validates problem exists	Provides minimal evidence that the problem exists	Generally describes the existence of the problem	Draws upon multiple sources of information to substantiate the existence of the problem
Defines key concepts and terms relevant to the problem of practice	Attempts to define the relevant concepts and terms	Defines key concepts and terms and begins to explain their relevance to the problem	Clearly defines and explains the key concepts and terms and their relevance to the problem
Analyzes educational significance of the problem of practice	Minimally describes the significance of the problem	Generally explains the educational significance of the problem	Clearly delineates the educational significance of the problem, including issues of equity

Comments:

Element B: Analyzes the problem using appropriate theoretical frameworks and critiques their application to the problem***Principles and Practices of Learning***

Levels of Proficiency			
	Emerging	Proficient	Exemplary
Identifies theoretical framework(s) relevant to the problem	Identifies framework(s) with incomplete connection to the problem	Identifies relevant theoretical framework(s)	Clearly identifies relevant theoretical framework(s) and provides a rationale for selection
Uses theoretical framework(s) to analyze the problem	Summarizes theoretical framework(s) without clear connection to the problem	Connects theoretical framework(s) to the problem	Insightfully uses theoretical frameworks to analyze the problem
Critiques the theoretical frameworks as they relate to the problem	Begins to question assumptions of theoretical framework(s) in relationship to the problem	Generally questions assumptions of theoretical framework(s) without examining how these assumptions may hinder understanding the problem	Specifically questions the assumptions of the theoretical frameworks and how these assumptions may hinder understanding the problem
Articulates the implications of analysis	Summarizes the problem and alludes to the implications of the analysis for practice	Demonstrates an understanding of the problem and begins to articulate the implication of the analysis for practice	Demonstrates deeper understanding of the problem and clearly articulates the implication of the analysis for practice

Comments:

Element C: Analyzes the problem using appropriate theoretical frameworks and critiques their application to the problem***Organizational Leadership Theory and Research in Education***

Levels of Proficiency			
	Emerging	Proficient	Exemplary
Identifies theoretical framework(s) relevant to the problem	Identifies framework(s) with incomplete connection to the problem	Identifies relevant theoretical framework(s)	Clearly identifies relevant theoretical framework(s) and provides a rationale for selection
Uses theoretical framework(s) to analyze the problem	Summarizes theoretical framework(s) without clear connection to the problem	Connects theoretical framework(s) to the problem	Insightfully uses theoretical frameworks to analyze the problem
Critiques the theoretical frameworks as they relate to the problem	Begins to question assumptions of theoretical framework(s) in relationship to the problem	Generally questions assumptions of theoretical framework(s) without examining how these assumptions may hinder understanding the problem	Specifically questions the assumptions of the theoretical frameworks and how these assumptions may hinder understanding the problem
Articulates the implications of analysis	Summarizes the problem and alludes to the implications of the analysis for practice	Demonstrates an understanding of the problem and begins to articulate the implication of the analysis for practice	Demonstrates deeper understanding of the problem and clearly articulates the implication of the analysis for practice

Comments:

Element D: Analyzes the problem using appropriate theoretical frameworks and critique their application to the problem***Educational Policy and Politics***

Levels of Proficiency			
	Emerging	Proficient	Exemplary
Identifies theoretical framework(s) relevant to the problem	Identifies framework(s) with incomplete connection to the problem	Identifies relevant theoretical framework(s)	Clearly identifies relevant theoretical framework(s) and provides a rationale for selection
Uses theoretical framework(s) to analyze the problem	Summarizes theoretical framework(s) without clear connection to the problem	Connects theoretical framework(s) to the problem	Insightfully uses theoretical frameworks to analyze the problem
Critiques the theoretical frameworks as they relate to the problem	Begins to question assumptions of theoretical framework(s) in relationship to the problem	Generally questions assumptions of theoretical framework(s) without examining how these assumptions may hinder understanding the problem	Specifically questions the assumptions of the theoretical frameworks and how these assumptions may hinder understanding the problem
Articulates the implications of analysis	Summarizes the problem and alludes to the implications of the analysis for practice	Demonstrates an understanding of the problem and begins to articulate the implication of the analysis for practice	Demonstrates deeper understanding of the problem and clearly articulates the implication of the analysis for practice

Comments:

Element E: Draws Conclusions and Recommends Actions with Respect to the Analysis of the Problem

Levels of Proficiency			
	Emerging	Proficient	Exemplary
Synthesizes the preceding analyses	Summarizes the preceding analyses	States a logical conclusion based on the preceding analyses	Synthesizes the preceding analyses into a more complex understanding or reframing of the problem
States recommendations for action	States recommendations which are not clearly connected to the synthesis	States recommendations which are a logical outgrowth of the synthesis	States recommendations which are a logical outgrowth of the synthesis and sensitive to the contextual, ethical, and cultural dimensions of the problem
Reflects on personal agency as a leader	Externalizes the problem without identifying what the doctoral candidate can do about it as a leader	Identifies what the doctoral candidate can do as a leader based on the recommendations	Identifies what the doctoral candidate can do as a leader based on the recommendations, acknowledging a personal role in the problem and its solution

Comments:

Element F: Written Communication

Levels of Proficiency			
	Emerging	Proficient	Exemplary
Coherent and convincing argument with substantive support for claims	Begins to make a coherent argument and build support for claims	Makes a coherent and convincing argument and builds support for claims with evidence	Makes a coherent and convincing argument by consistently supporting claims with credible, relevant, and substantive evidence
Organization	Begins to use organizational structures (introduction, headings for each core area with clear transitions, sequenced material within the body, and conclusion) within the paper	Consistently uses organizational structures (introduction, headings for each core area with clear transitions, sequenced material within the body, and conclusion) within the paper	Skillfully uses organizational structures (introduction, headings for each core area with clear transitions, sequenced material within the body, and conclusion) within the paper
Mechanics	Makes errors in sentence structure, grammar, punctuation, and/or spelling that impede understanding	Makes minor errors in sentence structure, grammar, punctuation, and/or spelling that do not impede understanding	Demonstrates detailed attention to mechanics including sentence structure, grammar, punctuation, and spelling
Citations	Inconsistently uses APA style in text citations and references	Generally uses correct APA style in text citations and references	Consistently uses correct APA style in text citations and references
Bias in language usage	Inconsistently uses APA style conventions to reduce bias in language	Generally adheres to APA style conventions to reduce bias in language	Consistently adheres to APA style conventions to reduce bias in language

Comments:

Section G: Overall assessment

_____ Pass

_____ No Pass

_____ Not Yet Satisfactory*

*Recommendations for additional work

Comments: